

## Current major event

### Recommendations of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response

The preventable global disaster caused by COVID-19 has revealed the urgent need for a new international system to improve the pandemic preparedness and response capacity to stop future infectious disease outbreaks from becoming catastrophic pandemics.

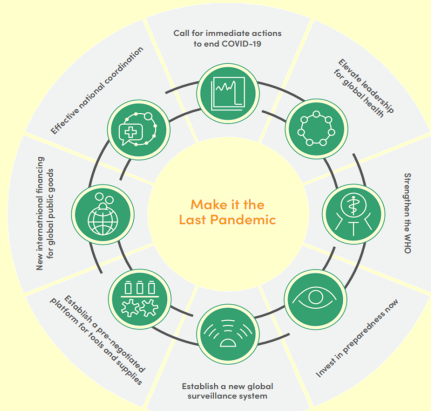
#### Editorial note

In May 2020, the World Health Assembly requested the WHO Director-General to initiate a comprehensive review of the international health response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response was constituted for this purpose and published its first report on 12 May 2021. The report was presented at the 74th World Health Assembly.

The Panel's key findings noted that overall global pandemic preparedness was weak and poorly funded; the notification procedures under the International Health Regulations were too slow for a fast moving new respiratory pathogen; countries were too slow in enacting an aggressive containment following declaration of the Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC); and coordinated global leadership and cooperative action were absent. While WHO worked hard to provide advice, guidance and support to countries, Member States had underpowered the organization, and gaps in social protection resulted in the pandemic widening inequalities with severe socio-economic impact on women, children, the vulnerable and marginalized populations.

The Panel highlighted the strengths to build on including health workers who continue to work tirelessly to save lives; successful national responses that were built on lessons from previous outbreaks, listened to science and effectively communicated with their

### Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response Recommendations



Source: [https://theindependentpanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/COVID-19-Make-it-the-Last-Pandemic\\_final.pdf](https://theindependentpanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/COVID-19-Make-it-the-Last-Pandemic_final.pdf)

communities; the number of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) that successfully implemented public health measures that kept illness and death to a minimum; vaccines were developed at an unprecedented speed; and data sharing and science collaboration were vital for alert and response.

The Panel recommended that high income countries commit to provide at least one billion vaccine doses to LMICs by 1 September 2021, and more than two billion doses by mid-2022; vaccine manufacturers to voluntarily agree to licensing and transfer technology for COVID-19 vaccines or by force through waiver of Intellectual Property Rights; countries to apply non-pharmaceutical public health measures systematically and rigorously using evidence-based strategies; and WHO to immediately develop a clear roadmap to guide and monitor country and global efforts towards ending the pandemic.

To ensure future outbreaks do not become a pandemic, the Panel recommended the elevation of pandemic preparedness and response to the highest level of political leadership; strengthening the independence, authority and financing of WHO; investing in preparedness and new rapid surveillance information systems; and raising new international financing for pandemic preparedness and response among other measures aimed at making COVID-19 the last pandemic.

### Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

#### COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

#### Current public health events of concern [cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

#### Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2021

Afghanistan	[66 275 (2812), 4.2%]
Bahrain	[214 870 (809), 0.4%]
Djibouti	[11 491 (152), 1.3%]
Egypt	[252 690 (14 670), 5.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[2 823 887 (78 381), 2.8%]
Iraq	[1 164 149 (16158), 1.4%]
Jordan	[729 706 (9 357), 1.3%]
Kuwait	[298 223 (1724), 0.6%]
Lebanon	[538 218 (7670), 1.4%]
Libya	[183 311 (3111), 1.7%]
Morocco	[516 812 (9119), 1.8%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[334 042 (3727), 1.1%]
Oman	[209 924 (2256), 1.1%]
Pakistan	[900 539 (20 251), 2.2%]
Qatar	[215 160 (543), 0.3%]
Saudi Arabia	[439 847 (7237), 1.6%]
Somalia	[14 623 (767), 5.2%]
Sudan	[35 193 (2594), 7.4%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[24 052 (1729), 7.2%]
Tunisia	[335 345 (12 236), 3.6%]
United Arab Emirates	[554 516 (1648), 0.3%]
Yemen	[6653 (1305), 19.6%]